

Educational Supplement

FIRST PUBLISHED 1910 PRICE 15p



Alternative debate

'The era of freedom is over', said Mr. Vaizey...

parents—American actors, lawyers and businessmen...



'Please not the books, not the desks, take me instead...'

It was like walking into a different world...

Speaking for Marx

Stephen Sedley, the barrister who attended the Tyndale...

The panel of judges, John Welch, ILEA staff inspector...

Lord Vaizey was giving the first of four lectures...

Poet taped

Catherine Payne, aged 17, has now shown her recorders for Wearden School, Welton, Northants...

Cuts come home

Whoever sits on Avon's new education committee after this week's...

the educational affairs of the authority. Parents, particularly those who...

It is all about reaching 16 years of age...

As for the latest positions, 1,350 signatures protesting against the...

Neither is it a matter of which the local Tories now claim...

The right chap

Scene: the lofty presidential chambers of the Conservative Party...

It is all about reaching 16 years of age...

As for the latest positions, 1,350 signatures protesting against the...

The Conservative electoral landslide could mean more councils following... Triumphant Tories to fight all-in plans

Ripley areas had been submitted by the Labour Party last year...

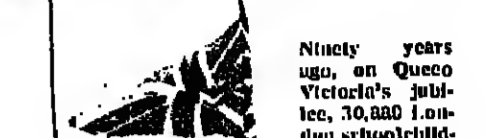
It is likely they will all plead financial grounds for non-compliance...

On other consequences of the election results concerns the political balance of power on the ILEA...

Before the election it had 18 Labour members and 17 Conservatives...

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Before the election it had 18 Labour members and 17 Conservatives...



Ninety years ago, an Queen Victoria's jubilee, 10,000 London schoolchildren were chosen to attend a monster jamboree in Hyde Park...

Poly population

A record number of students are studying in polytechnics this year...

Something new

George Walker and Lawrence Steinhilber offer ideas for jacking the question of accountability...

Real experiences

A pioneering teacher training course gives students a chance to work closely with children before jacking a whole class...

Another country

'You cannot have a language without a race of people to speak it'...

Prepared to pay

Private schools in the USA, as in Britain, are booming...

School to work



The Manpower Services Commission will not take over the careers service, page 3...

Extra: Remedial and special education

Leaders: 2) personal column, Gerry Fowler, 4) foreign news, 10, 11; letters, 12, 13; sports, 14; features, curriculum control, accountability, teacher training, science, 15-17; books, homosexuality by Michael Clarke, literature, education, science, children's literature, the arts, 19-21; crossword, bridge, Book, 88.

US school inc

The American School in London, which provides a \$3,000 a head—mainly for the children of expatriates working for United States...

Crossword No 1,084

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers and some letters filled in.

Across

- 1 Displeaseth month for which...

Down

- 1 There's work in that...

Maths teasers

Maths problems including 'Trisecting a triangle' and 'Playing with numbers'.

First of many?

Declining population and consequent cuts to educational institutions...

Next week

Robert Silvey describes the curriculum of imaginary childhood worlds...



Summit declaration on jobs for young people

It will not have gone without notice that the communiqué issued after the Downing Street summit described the creation of more jobs as 'our most urgent task'...

The expectation is that, in one form or another, there will be a continuation and expansion of all or some of the present job creation and work experience schemes...

There already is some attempt to exchange experience on these matters throughout the European Community...

Mr. Callaghan was in a relatively strong position to press this issue at the summit because British plans for some sort of 'youth opportunity guarantee'...

Extra: Remedial and special education

Please could you ask the cleaners of the Law Library to be quieter in the early morning as the noise disturbs members of the occupation both sleeping and studying...



AMA on English backlash

The Association of Metropolitan Authorities has published its comments on the Government's consultative document on English devolution (page 5), and has performed its proper representational duty in warning of the dangers of an English backlash implicit in any devolution scheme which appears to give any preference to Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. Because of the way the devolution proposals have been brought forward—as a panic response to the sweeping political gains of nationalist parties there is a danger that Parliament will rush into legislation without the usual arrangements which discriminate against those areas of the United Kingdom where politics is not conducted on national lines.

Education is clearly one of the sensitive topics along with other public services where already considerable arrangements which discriminate against those areas of the United Kingdom where politics is not conducted on national lines.

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Setting the numbers right

In the seventies there has been a three-fold change. Wastage has declined as the expansion of further and higher education has slowed down, and jobs have become more scarce outside teaching. More commitment to better staffing standards first weakened and then collapsed, till today it is a brave man who could assume either party would defend present staffing ratios when the financial pressures are on. And, going back before these economic and political changes and continuing after them, there has been a sustained downturn in birthrate which means that reduced obligations over the next 10 years can be charged fairly closely.

But that is not to say that a change in the economic climate might not even bring about another sudden alteration in the wastage rate—may be that there is anything sacrosanct about the present staffing ratios. There is, after all, something ironic in the incidence of present overstaffed schools and the readiness of politicians to cut back on teacher employment and school supplies. When the Irony dawns on school people, the decline in the school population will make it easier and less costly to go forward to new staffing levels.

Poly figures up

The latest figures on polytechnic admissions show a 7 per cent increase compared with the 4 per cent increase reported by the universities. These are broadly in line with the slight increase in the size of the 18 to 19 year age group—though of course student entry at various ages, and any direct comparison has to take account of this.

The polytechnic figures also confirm other reports that applications for science and technology are rising (though the Government will be disappointed to note that not all the polytechnic increases are accounted for by science students). How students decide whether or what to study remains one of the mysteries which

Long step to nowhere

It has almost become an educational cliché that change is not necessarily change for the better. To say that no attempt in reform ever results in a consistent improvement is quite another thing. Yet this is the impression conveyed by the recent report of one of the largest studies of educational innovation yet to be carried out in the United States.

The study, Project Longstep (Longitudinal Study of Educational Practices) set out to investigate the effectiveness of highly intensive, innovative educational practices on students in grades 1 through 12—that is, from the beginning to the end of compulsory schooling.

It looked at a variety of approaches—including team teaching, "multimedia emphasis", and a number of practices associated with individualized instruction—and sought to relate them to students' home background, initial achievement, teacher characteristics and post-test performance. The collection of field data spanned the years 1970-71 to 1972-73 to allow the effect of innovation to be observed over a reasonable period of time.

The main conclusion was that, although there were large gains in reading, language and arithmetic skills in some participating schools, the experimental group consistently yearly gains in achievement would occur for a sample of intensive, innovative educational programmes was not supported. Even worse, "level of innovation or degree of individualization was negatively related to the possible, related to growth in arithmetic achievement."

This amounts to saying that if you want your kid to be good at maths, send him to a traditional school—a truth which the hack papers have previously propounded without the benefit of research.

It seems difficult to ignore the message of despair this study holds out to progressives and reformers everywhere. The research was on a sample of 500 teachers, and 30,000 students; for every student, at least 3,500 data items were collected. In keeping with this, the complete report of the study runs to nearly 1,000 pages.

The work was undertaken by a high calibre and reputable body, the American Institute for Research in the Behavioral Sciences, which has in the 30 years since it was founded tackled a vast range of research studies.

The standards of presentation of the material are uniformly high. The volume of data set out, the text is unusually readable, the findings are excellently signposted with convenient and careful summaries. The technical competence of the statistical analysis is, as far as I can judge, impressive; and the data appear to have been most conscientiously assembled.

And yet... it somehow goes against the grain to accept the conclusions of the exercise, incontrovertible though the supporting arguments appear. It seems so contrary to experience to say that the individualization of pupils, educational provision has virtually nothing to do with their progress, and that the competence of their teachers fails to count for very much either.

But do we have to surrender to the weight of systematic evidence, just because it is systematic? The example of researches on class size is familiar, in which the shared experiences of thousands of practitioners that it does make a difference are obliterated by a handful of research findings that it does not.

Another case in point is the way in which university tutors who have closely observed a student's competence over three years subjugate the evidence to the results of a formal examination conducted out over a few hours and marked by colleagues as fallible as they. Temptations of this kind surely deserve to be resisted, at least until the methods and assumptions behind the findings which run counter to experience can be subjected more closely.

If one follows this prescription with the Longstep study, a whole Pandora's box of troubles is unleashed. The first group of problems to "conquer" in the past that it was launched in the hope of the beautiful principles of the guarded quantities of data

Schools Council: less power for teachers

A new two-tier structure which would loosen the teachers' hold on the much-criticized Schools Council has been put forward by the council's chairman, Sir Alex Spith.

A draft of the plan was discussed this week by the council's internal review body and will be examined in greater detail at another meeting later this month.

Sir Alex proposes a system similar to that used by many universities. He wants a convocation of about 50 members which would not be controlled by teachers, and a professional board which would have a teacher majority.

The convocation would be a meeting ground for teachers and representatives of industry, commerce, local and central government, parents and others. Twenty of the 50 seats would be allotted to teachers. The convocation would keep an eye on relations between schools and community.

As an example, Sir Alex says, the convocation could express concern to the professional board about standards of numeracy of school leavers. It could discuss the need for a new exam from the point of view of parents and industry. Or it could consider the discipline problems faced in schools which might be created by the wider community.

The board would be made up of representatives of industry, commerce, local and central government, parents and others. Twenty of the 50 seats would be allotted to teachers. The convocation would keep an eye on relations between schools and community.

Local authorities keep grip on careers service

The Manpower Services Commission has failed in its strenuous campaign to gain control of the careers service. The service is likely to be expanded, but will continue to be administered by local education authorities, according to a report from the commission.

At the same time, as is reported on page 9, the commission is in the process of negotiating with the Department of Employment for reorganization under which it would become responsible for all manpower work in the field throughout the country, including most of the existing regional activities of the department itself.

Mr John Golding, Employment Under Secretary, who is the minister responsible for the careers service, told the TES this week that the decision was based primarily on the need to preserve the service and its close proximity to the school system "was essential to that however trivial, one may explain it; and this study, he looks solely at inputs and makes no attempt to measure the ultimate value of the approach is acknowledged in the statement that "There are no clear signs of school personnel who might have a notable effect on achievement. Unfortunately, analyses utilized... were designed to 'tease out' effects."

Needless to say, the report with the usual pessimistic trick of education studies to make up for the present deficit by trucking down the "untested" significant educational gains.

It would be easy enough to off this particular venture as a dead dinosaur, spent its time being kept up the pressure, but it is worth noting that the proposals for the service and the careers inspectorate of the Department of Employment to the commission.

Each time the proposal was turned down flatly. The failure of the MSC's latest bid is the most significant in that current developments have favoured its arguments. The proposals for a government guarantee of work or training for all school leavers, which are now being considered by ministers, would give a greatly increased role for careers services in operating more than erroneous assumptions made about birthrates, says Professor Redwood.

Don queries birthrate factor

The present cut in colleges of education is the result of over-expansion in the 1960s, not the decline in the birthrate, according to a Cambridge economist, Professor W. B. Redwood, writing in the latest issue of *Lloyds Bank Review*.

He says only 7.8 per cent of the 408,000 extra teachers taken on between 1961 and 1971 were needed to match the increase in the school population over that period. Nearly twice as many (15.2 per cent) were taken on to reduce the teacher-pupil ratio or to cater for the extra 77 per cent (314,000) were needed to make up for teachers who retired, died or left the profession.

Over that period the number of teachers employed in schools went up from 318,000 to 412,000, an increase of 30 per cent. The mistakes made in the over expansion of teacher training, were due to



Sir Alex Spith

certainly be delayed during forthcoming meetings.

A reorganized council would be able to develop a more positive approach to educational issues rather than "the passive approach adopted hitherto," the document says. "The wish for a speedier, less cumbersome, appraisal and decision-making structure is acknowledged, but we consider that thorough and high quality appraisal is a more important consideration."

Sir Alex also urges the council to have the power in comment on the training of teachers.

His plan received fairly wide support this week. The review body liked his comments on the great education debate initiated by the Prime Minister last year and on which Sir Alex has remained cool.

Union rejects explanation of Oxon cuts

Mr Max Morris, chairman of the National Union of Teachers' action committee, hit back this week at the explanation given by the county's Education Officer, Mr Buggdonor, for the county's £3m cuts in education spending in an article in the TES last week.

Mr Morris said at a meeting of NUT members in Oxford this week that Mr Buggdonor had admitted to the union that the authority had underspent its budget last year by about £600,000. This would pay for jobs for nearly all the 464 teachers the county wanted to sack.

Mr Morris said: "In addition he revealed that the county had a contingency fund of £6.25m. By spending some of this, existing pupil-teacher ratios could be maintained."

Instead Oxfordshire is imposing the biggest staffing cuts and the biggest deterioration in staffing ratios of any local authority in the country.

Oxfordshire teachers have voted solidly to back industrial action to defend class sizes and teacher employment in a series of ballots held in the county.

The NUT has implemented the cuts in the MSC's Holland which might involve a big increase in the careers work load, it would have to consider ways in which the service could be substantially expanded.

Mr Ray Hurst, secretary of the Institute of Careers Officers, warmly welcomed Mr Golding's statement. "It will greatly reassure careers officers throughout the country," he said, "and we are convinced that it is essential that we should remain part of the education service."

NUT turns down Tyndale plea

A call for industrial action in support of the six William Tyndale teachers who face dismissal was rejected by the National Union of Teachers last week.

The union's executive turned down a request for a strike after the North London Teachers' Association had voted to seek permission. Mr Fred Jarvis, general secretary, said: "The executive reject any suggestion that this case is anything more than a matter for the teachers concerned."

"This is not the issue. The teachers concerned acted in defiance of their own union in taking the action they did in withdrawing their labour as well as defying the proposal of the local authority to institute an inspection of the school."

The teachers have lodged an appeal against dismissal.

What's best

A two-day conference to highlight successful practice in comprehensive schools was announced by Mrs Williams, the Education Secretary, in Parliament this week. Some 50 teachers and local authority representatives have already been invited and DES officials and HM Inspectors will attend. The conference is to be held at York University, December 15 and 16.

Probation—without protection

Newly trained teachers may soon be offered a chance to do a probationary year in a school even where there is no prospect of being employed permanently. It would mean that they would be required to work under probationary conditions until they had completed their probation year.

But Mr Lurry Green, an executive member, said this week that he thought his colleagues might be moving away towards a tacit approval of such contracts where authorities accepted a responsibility for whatever permanent posts might come up from among those who had completed their probation satisfactorily.

colleges buildings.

In court, Mr Sirovthous argued that the polytechnic authorities, who expelled him in November for disrupting a governors' meeting, had no right to stop him performing his lawful duties as a sabbatical priest.

Student president jailed

Mr Andy Stratholun, 29-year-old Trnaskyst, president of the North East London Polytechnic's students, was sent to Pentonville Prison by a High Court judge on Wednesday for refusing to obey a court order banning him from the college buildings.

TO KNOW / TO THINK

Education has always tried to provide pupils with the knowledge they need and to equip them with the thinking skills to use that knowledge and also to cope with life.

Knowledge has always been easier to handle because it is concrete and teachable. Thinking skills have been so much more difficult to teach that their neglect has been rationalized as follows: teaching knowledge inevitably trains thinking at the same time; thinking is no more teachable than IQ.

The CoRT Thinking programme was developed to provide a practical and definite teaching structure for the many teachers who have found that thinking skill and the ability to absorb information do not necessarily go together. The CoRT Thinking programme is already the most widely used programme in the world for the direct teaching of thinking as a skill. Teachers have adapted the framework for their own use in a variety of different areas: English; General Studies; Head's contact lesson; as a thinking base for other traditional subjects; and as a subject area in its own right (for the GTS certificate).

Each of the six CoRT packs can be used on its own or as part of the programme: CoRT 1 (Broaden); CoRT 2 (Organize); CoRT 3 (Interact); CoRT 4 (Creativity); CoRT 5 (Information and Feeling); CoRT 6 (Action). CoRT 6 provides a specific thinking framework that can be applied to any area.

Further details from
Direct Education Services Ltd.
1 Alfred Street, Blendford Forum, Dorset



Ottersham pupils hold over their petition

State boarding party sails on Westminster

Six sailing boats, five capes and two minor launches came down the Thames this week in an attempt to save Surrey County Council from having to close down Ottersham School in 1979.

College closures raise fears for RE

Government policy on teacher training is seriously affecting the output of religious education teachers. Mrs. Shirley Williams, Education Secretary, was told yesterday.

Ulster parents to have say in plans for integration

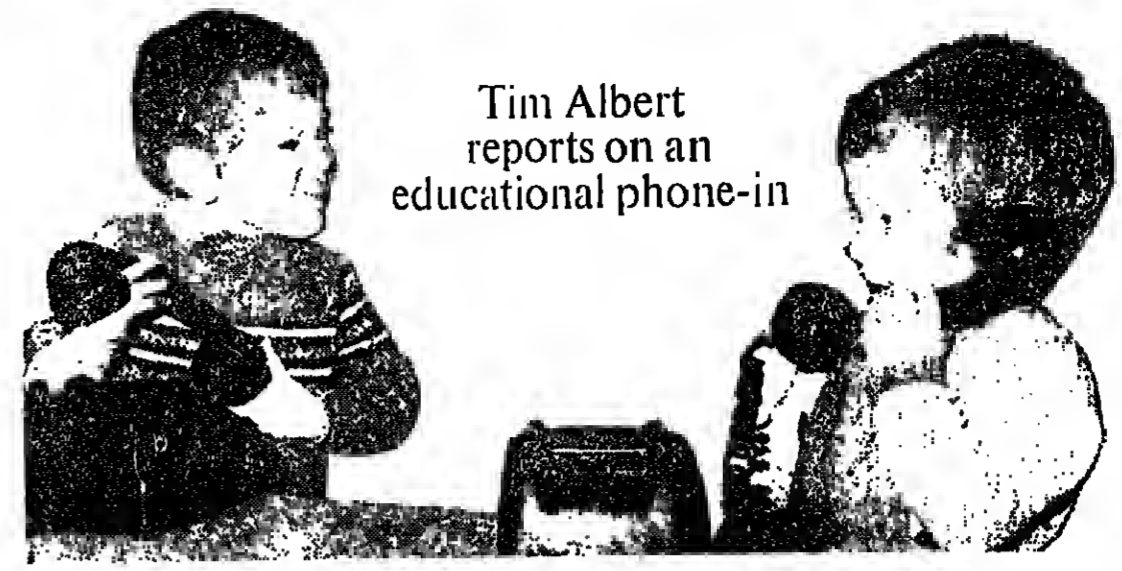
A bill to enable integrated Catholic and Protestant schools to be set up in Northern Ireland has been introduced into the House of Lords by the Alliance Party member, Lord Dunlop.

Councils criticized for discriminating against homosexuals

Social services departments are prejudiced about homosexuality, both among their own employees and among clients, according to a report published this week by the National Council for Civil Liberties.

Retarded need more guidance

Most mentally handicapped teenagers get no help in deciding their future, according to a report published by the National Development Group for the Handicapped this week.



Tim Albert reports on an educational phone-in

Sorting out some crossed lines

"I would like to know," said the woman on the other end of the phone-in programme, "why the education authorities have changed minds to such a complicated system that even my son who took his A level five years ago and passed doesn't understand it..."

Parliament 100,000 take literacy course

Since the adult literacy programme started in 1975, it was estimated that about 100,000 students had received or were receiving tuition in England and Wales, Mr Gordon Oakes, Minister of State for Education and Science, told the Commons.

Another 300 get social work grants

A further £500,000 is being allocated by the Department of Health to increase by about 300 the number of grants for graduate students accepted on courses leading to the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work.

Still closed to Bucks graduates

Holdings of the Ilicca at the new University College at Buckingham will not be able to compete for graduates posts in the civil service, Mr Chris Morris, Minister for the Civil Service, told the Commons.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS. 3 day Conference on EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE EDUCATION OF 16-19 YEAR OLDS. 7-9 September 1977. Jordanhill College of Education.

College bans programme and speech on gay liberation

Graves and Aylesham College of Higher Education, in Cheshire, has cut out a BBC television programme from a course for youth leaders and withdrawn an invitation to a visiting lecturer because both were concerned with homosexuality.

£26m spent on local arts

The arts and museums services in Northern Ireland received about £26m in grants and contributions from English local authorities during 1974-75, says an Arts Council survey published this week.

We went to them as visitors. They came to us as friends.

The UK-US School Exchange Scheme is concerned with establishing links between communities and between individuals. It allows small parties of pupils aged 15-18 accompanied by a teacher to spend four weeks living in American homes, attending American schools, enjoying the American experience, establishing friendships. Reciprocal visits by the American students to British schools and homes in June complete the pattern.

LETTERS

Those who should know better

Sir—Gerry Fowler's cloudb jibes (April 29) might not merit a reply but they appeared in a lesser Journal. He imputes ill measured arrogance to members of the Headmasters' Association assembled for the annual conference at Oxford. He then goes on to accuse us of an interest in sixth forms based on wilful ignorance of comparative costs and efficiency, and motivated by the effect of their size on our own salaries.

Thought for Mr Jarvis to ponder

Sir—Your leader's comment on April 22 about the Secretary of State's suggestion for a contract between parents and teachers regarding their mutual obligations and responsibilities towards children is less than fair.

much research, is that children's educational achievement is well below expectations. This is a well-known fact. It is not surprising that the educational system, but also the failings of parents to provide stability at home and to initiate their children into habits and procedures which will help to maximize what they can derive from school.

Who says there's nothing wrong?

Sir—I am puzzled by the argument in your leader, "Whatever happened to 'O' level?" (April 29). I just don't understand your language when you say that teachers deny that anything is "wrong".

teachers' reactions to the current anything-but-good debate. But you are right in implying that teachers are often adopting a defensive posture when they need not do so.

CEE can't bridge the gap

Sir—The gap in the sixth-form curriculum mentioned by four heads of department in an ILEA secondary school (April 22) still exists, but the CEE is not the answer.



"If you ask me, a cutback in education debates would help..."

College that won't lie down

Sir—It was suggested by Get Summerfield (April 22) that his College "in some degree" he said to have died.

Parents' right to know

Sir—It is encouraging that suddenly there is so much discussion on the issue of secret school records. I do not think it ever occurred to many teachers that this secrecy should be challenged or discussed.

When the tax man came in

Sir—I in 1973-74 took part in the United States/United Kingdom teacher exchange scheme but, although my American exchange partner and I had agreed to swap accommodation, his mind at the last moment changed.

Unfair to maths staff

Sir—Dame Kathleen Oberonshaw's "superior" on the professional integrity of mathematics departments in colleges of education are unfair.

How to run a viable sixth

Sir—May I offer support for Mr M. B. Hattersley's case (April 29) that 13-19 schools can show the way forward in the present concern for viable and economic sixth forms?

Told off by the bank manager

Sir—Martin Lightfoot's "Case for Copying" (April 22) reminds me of a letter I received recently. A chief inspector in English, in an island in the north, writes that he has a number of sixth formers who make up an important part of the truly comprehensive sixth and who served by other alternatives.

Correction

Mr M. R. Pike's letter (May 6) on Nuffield chemistry should have read "indeed, some of the chemicals recommended in Stage II experiments are now proscribed (not prescribed) in the DES booklet, Safety in Science Laboratories Series No 2, and it is now illegal to use them in school laboratories..."

Not enough weight given to oral French

Sir—For a number of years we have been successfully teaching French at this junior school to the top two years, using Nuffield En Avant as a basis. French has also been taught at the other junior primary schools which feed the local comprehensive.

Letters for publication should arrive by Tuesday morning at the latest. They should be as short as possible and should be written on one side of the paper only. The editor reserves the right to cut or amend them if necessary.

What would your family do without you?

For objective advice on all insurance and investment matters, contact Teachers' Specialists in advising the teaching profession for over a century.

Forgotten diploma that could bring more cash

Sir—More than 50 years ago the Craft Education was established by the Committee of Craft Education, and directed to carry out a programme of development leading to the award of a diploma of craft education which would be recognised by educational authorities.

Many approaches were made during this period to the Burnham Committee to achieve tangible financial recognition for the diploma, and at least this recognition has been given. All holders of the honours award (MCCED Hons) are entitled to the salary addition known as the merit award, made under Appendix III Annex D of the Burnham Report.

COURSES

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COURSES

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NORTH RIDING COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
IN-SERVICE COURSES
SUMMER SCHOOL 10th-15th JULY 1977
Teachers who are considering enjoying the delights of Scarborough...

DES Short Course M42
6-8 September 1977
Bath College of Higher Education
Newton Park site
Health Education in Higher Education
This short conference will consider the Court Report, Health and Safety and Health Education in initial and in-service teacher training...

Religious Education in a Multi-Faith Society
18-23 JULY 1977
Bedford College of Higher Education Bedford
This residential course organised by the Department of Education & Science will consider the contribution which religious education can make to racial and social harmony...

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CHILDREN'S BOOKS
Three times a year THE TIMES Educational Supplement publishes a special inset on children's books to allow extra coverage of the subject. The next appears on June 17.

Sport



Kathryn Harridge: round in 81.

W Midlands walk away with titles

by Stanley Levenson

For the third year running, it is the right ward, the West Midlands, which has taken the honours in the Schools Running Championships.

In the junior girls walk, 2.5 km, and the Intermediate (3 km) the West Midlands triumphed for the first three years of the series.

The senior race (5 km) at Mansfield Dagenham (Staffs) was a junior triumph in the team prize also won by the team from the Midlands.

Football trophy for St Austell

Ferry Hill Youth Club, Devon, has won the National Association Youth Clubs football flag for a 5-0 defeat of St Austell FC, Cornwall, at Brentford's ground, London.

Girls reach golf final

Midhurst Grammar School, West Sussex, and Ysgol Emrys ap Iwan, Aberystwyth, are through to the inter-divisional Aer Lingus girls' schools team golf championships at Foshells Golf Club, Surrey, on Sunday week.

Lawrence Stenhouse proposes a resource-based experiment in accountability

Education is one form of the pursuit of human perfection; because its aspirations are limitless, it must always fail. Success in education is a product of the lowering of aspiration rather than the raising of achievement.

Nadia Comaneci-queen of the gym

Nadia Comaneci, without the crowd-rousing appeal of Olga Korbut, has replaced her Soviet rival as the pin-up for most young girls with gymnastics stunts in their eyes.

Miss Groves to lead PEA

Miss Lillian Groves, head of PE and dean of women at the College of St. Edith and St. Bede, Durham, is the new president of the Physical Education Association.

Innovations, innovations

George Walker puts the case for forming local curriculum advisory groups

Anyone outside education who has been trying to follow the Great Debate will be wondering who does decide what is taught in schools. They will probably not be surprised to learn that those inside education do not have a clear idea either.

There is now a strong feeling that the Government will lay down broad curricular guidelines to give some definition to a compulsory core curriculum. At the other end of the line, the Taylor committee leaks point to a reduction in curricular autonomy of heads.

Education at local level has suffered serious blows in recent years, with the loss of its privileged position with respect to the state support grant, the "incorporation" of many chief officers and now the sad end of the AEC.

time schooling and full-time employment, then it will only be done with the knowledge, support and coordination of the local authority.

Curricular variety may be the spice of life for a head and some of his or her staff, but not for a parent trapped without choice in a rigidly-interpreted catchment zone, nor even for the parent with choice, but in no position to judge between complex option blocks, timetable flow-charts and rival patterns of setting.

As numbers begin to decline in secondary schools, arguments in favour of local resource rationalization will become more compelling, first for the post-16 pupils, and then for those in the fourth and fifth years whose courses could be seriously restricted once numbers drop below a certain level.

The curriculum in the later years of compulsory education is certain to become more and more tied up with the pattern of local employment, as schools extend their search for more relevant, vocationally oriented courses. If schools are ever to make progress in weeding down the sharp division between full-

addition to ensuring that the overall provision in the area was satisfactory. In this sense (but in a very different context) the advisory group would act rather like the CNA.

The local authority, then, should set up (possibly on a divisional basis) curriculum advisory groups, containing representatives of local employers, parents and teachers.

Heads would be required to discuss a school's curriculum with the governing body and to submit it, with comments and questions under a number of headings, to the advisory group.

Does the curriculum fit the government's guidelines? Is the curriculum unreasonably differentiated in the early years? What are the expected class numbers and staffing ratios? Is there an acceptable range of examination targets?

It would be unfortunate if the advisory group were seen only as a watchdog body. Although it would be naive to suppose that its initial effect would be other than towards curricular conservatism, imaginative authorities would soon recognize its potential for supporting local initiatives, with an authority that could never come from a group that represented only one of the interested parties.

Since the Government seems unlikely to impose a centrally controlled curriculum, all the initiative will remain with the head and the teachers in the schools. This is how it should be, but the final control must be held by the political body elected by the local community to take responsibility for education.

Using tests and judgmental criteria, schools should survey and report on their achievements and their problems. It should be unacceptable for a school to regard any achievement as satisfactory. The level of performance in any area should be acceptable only in terms of the concentration of resources in an alternative problem area.

Government's record in fighting unemployment. It is still not one that invites complacency. Of course, careful examination of the stock cupboard of the majority—though by no means all—of our state schools reveals that the equipment with which the teachers go into battle is more like that of Dad's Army than of a corps d'elite.

At the top end you might have a school in which the teachers taught no more than 20 hours a week with classes never higher than 12.

The point of such an exercise would not be to suggest a state education system on these principles, but rather to build into any principle of accountability other dimensions than those of teacher competence. No doubt we would find that investment failed off in its effects; but the point is that there is little excuse for planners knowing so little about its yield.

There would, in principle, be comparatively little problem in asking schools to assess themselves. Some resources would have to be made available for this exercise, but the effects on performance are likely to be much greater than those of external assessment.

It is my experience that schools will want to use standardized tests within such an assessment, and one could hope that the Assessment of Performance Unit could thrash out what "last" programme it would be best to commission. Such tests should be taken seriously—but not too seriously. They should be instruments through which schools can get to know themselves and their performance, but no claims should be made that they provide complete and valid pictures of that performance. There is much more to an annual report than a balance sheet, and balance sheets can be deceptive.

Lawrence Stenhouse is director of the Centre for Applied Research in Education, University of East Anglia.

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But that was in another country...

Was there ever a time, gentle reader, when you indulged in Gondalium? Robert Silvey would like to know

The literary creativity of the Brontë family ensured that the fantasy realms of their childhood, Gondal and Angria, would become well known. But it is more than doubtful whether many of the more ordinary children who have created their own Gondals or Angrias have ever heard of these Hibernian melodramas.

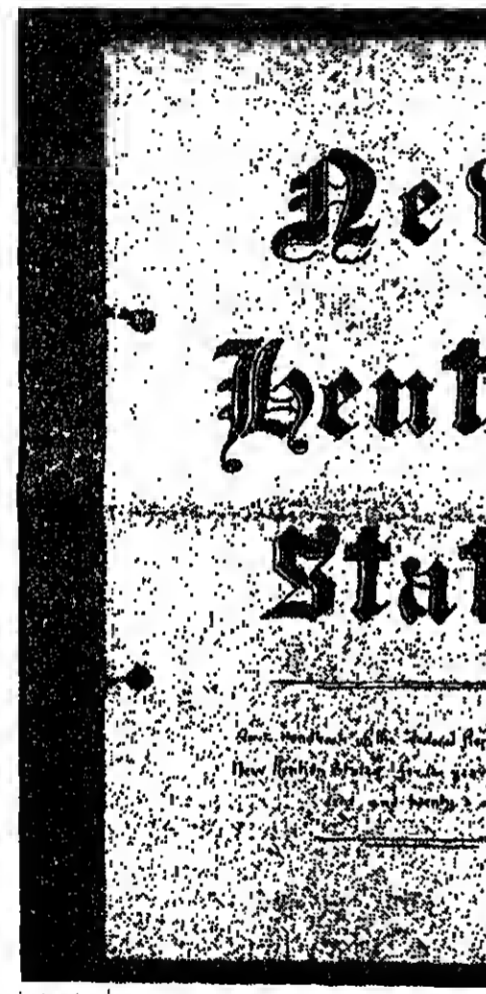
"Gondalium". If I may so call it, was for me a solitary pursuit. At the time I came across only one or two other boys who practised it, and for them, too, it was equally solitary. We would compare notes and show polite interest in each other's Gondals but did not cooperate in play. It would have been difficult to do so anyway because our imaginary romances were not necessarily contemporaneous.

Nearly 60 years have passed since then, and during this time I have only occasionally stumbled on other childhood Gondalists. Recently one such invited me to spend a week-end comparing notes with him. Since this would amount to a summit meeting of two heads of state, our letters arranging it were properly couched in terms dictated by protocol.

I suspect that there are plenty of one-time Gondalists about; that it is a form of fantasy which, though uncommon, is by no means rare. (I recently heard of a cousin who, in a television interview, that it was a childhood interest of his.) I also suspect that its incidence is greatest among solitary children and probably greater among boys than among girls, comparable female fantasists more often taking the form of imaginary families.

Middle-Earth was Tolkien's Gondal. Mary Hoffman looks at two new attempts to delineate it

On the Lord's Day, I got down to organizing the religious institutions of the New Hibernian States. If anyone had asked why I spent so much time compiling the Year Book of my Republic or editing its principal newspaper I would have thought it a silly question. The answer was obvious: it was fun. It never occurred to me that it was an interesting psychological phenomenon and I certainly was unaware that there was anything "educational" about it. But, looking back, I can see that it had its educational value—not so much in the acquisition of knowledge as in the stimulation of curiosity.



The original title page, and a sample from the scores of financial tables, in Silvey's childhood annual.

Just as a language needs people to speak it, and a history to shape it, so do names need heroes and victims to bear them and it is easy to believe that Tolkien worked this way round. The Tolkien Companion, now paperbacked, is got up as a work of reference, arranged alphabetically, fully cross-referenced and described by its compiler as a concordance to the "resolutions" of Professor Tolkien. This doesn't just vary much in the Tolkien spirit: it is kept up throughout, even to the extent of a dedication in Quentyn, Tolkien's "High-Elven" tongue.

By again, having conceived of the New Hibernian States as a going concern in the contemporary world, I soon began to wonder "how it got like this". Its characteristics most largely have been consequences of anecdotal events so I had to invent a history for them. But no sooner had I accounted for the previous hundred years than I found they, in turn, had to be accounted for—and so it went on. Moreover, since my republic was "real", it would have gone against the grain to have had recourse to magical interventions in its story: its history had to be plausible, so that imposed restraints upon inventiveness. I am thankful that, because the people of New Hibernia derived from Anglo-Saxon stock, I was spared the labour of inventing a language for them.

Sample of financial tables from Silvey's childhood annual, showing columns for names and numerical values.

The Lord of the Rings presents a world without God, he answers, rebelling feebly, that "while God is present, Tolkien's universe, he remains unseen," and he takes on the first reviewers of *The Fellowship of the Ring* as by man albeit in brackets: "(neither statement was entirely false...)"

One of the great advantages of a Gondal is that it forms a framework within which practically any interest can find scope, be it philately, civil engineering, nautical history or crime, music or sport, armoured bearings, aviation or sanitation. In my unvarnished home 60 years ago there were some activities which were, and others which were not, suitable for Sunday; but on one demurred if

Just as a language needs people to speak it, and a history to shape it, so do names need heroes and victims to bear them and it is easy to believe that Tolkien worked this way round. The Tolkien Companion, now paperbacked, is got up as a work of reference, arranged alphabetically, fully cross-referenced and described by its compiler as a concordance to the "resolutions" of Professor Tolkien. This doesn't just vary much in the Tolkien spirit: it is kept up throughout, even to the extent of a dedication in Quentyn, Tolkien's "High-Elven" tongue.

But, in spite of the format, addicts will find it far more attractive for through-reading under various headings than for consulting as an index. After taking the edge off their thirst for more Tolkienism by looking such as Legolas, Gimli and Gandalf, they can drink deep from Mr. Tolkien's seemingly impenetrable wall of knowledge about such obscure matters as the relation between different Elvish alphabets. One's cup overflows only occasionally with the addition of the compiler's relevant comments. Sadly, a few remarks of one of the characters elsewhere and in such superb style that it would be unnecessary (and impertinence) to attempt any précis of it here.

Coming out

Michael Clarke on some studies of homosexuality

interested in children and rape appears to be a predominantly heterosexual taste. As for the old argument that homosexuality is a threat to the continuity of the race it presupposes that all homosexuals were and are always exclusively homosexual and denies the persistent evidence that it is precisely these societies—most notably the Dutch and the American—which practice it most that have the highest birth rates—like the Arab countries where several researchers estimated that homosexual activity even outnumbered heterosexual activity.

Unfortunate, unlike most other minorities, homosexuals often can and do remain "hidden". With secrecy comes a lack of identity for a group in very much in need of mutual support. The homosexual does not only discover sexuality, CHE, PO Box 427, 32 King Street, Manchester M60 2EL has both articles and letters registering doubts about the movement's tactics. The law is ineffectual, muld, discriminatory and open to various interpretations. The Gay movement's concern as far as possible to create a great volume of unnecessary guilt and so explosive tension within the personality. No wonder, then, that without the social and ideological support of the heterosexual, the homosexual is sometimes disturbed and that the disturbance was far long attributed to homosexuality itself by early psychoanalysts. At least the American Psychiatric Association has learned: in 1974 it declassified homosexuality as an illness.

Both Tripp and Babuscio are convinced that homosexuals regularly perform effectively in society despite general antipathy, discrimination and even persecution and Quentyn Crisp's autobiography is wisely and succinctly wisely proof that they do. He, however, is exceptional. Homosexuals who decline themselves publicly "come out", as they say. It is a turning point which rejects the negative labels and asserts the positive potentials. Such a major change requires courage, conviction and decision and demands proper respect in return. It is a responsible moral position and there is no going back.

Critical indigestion

Graham Hubbard on the novel and modern criticism

The Modern English Novel: the reader, the writer and the work. Edited by Gabriel Jostpovic. Opeo Books £2.95. 7291 0032 4.

how what they are writing just as and the wish to rekindle the interest of readers in narrative fiction by sharing that experience. Unfortunately it is doubtful whether this book will rekindle anyone's interest in fiction: it is not on the whole a good advertisement for the value of the novel. Though it contains some useful interpretative work, such as Gamil Salgado's discussion of Lawrence's *Women in Love* and Bernard Harrison's comparison of Jane Austen and Marjorie Pinch, the book has rather more than its fair share of pseudo-profundity and ill-digested bits of philosophy.

Pound's worth

David Wright

rejected versus are full of Alma Tadema imagery and Weldon Street English. As the introduction remarks, this Pound might be called the best poet of the Nineties. One's second reaction is admiration for Pound's dogged hacking of a way through Swinburne to Colton and the Centos. The third: renewed admiration for Pound's unflinching, despite his early vocabulary of tushery. As notes of a poem never reprinted (Suble O Pond...

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WARWICKSHIRE JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOLS

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PRIMARY Scale 2 Posts continued

WARWICKSHIRE JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOLS continued

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Education Department Appointment of Headteacher LAMBLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL, Lambley, Nottinghamshire

PRIMARY SCHOOLS Scale 2 Posts Teachers of English to Children of Families of Overseas Origin in Primary Schools

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SANDWELL Metropolitan Borough of

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KINGSTON Upon Thames Kingston Grammar School

KIRKLEES Metropolitan Council

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SUSSEX Headships continued

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Headship of the Girls' Public Day School Trust

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS

Applications are invited for the post of

GENERAL SECRETARY

Head Office is in London
Organization covers 1,000 Women's Clubs
in England and Wales

General Secretary is responsible for overall direction of work under Executive Committee, Planning of National Conference and General Educational Week-End Conferences.

Applicants should have had experience in similar or allied work, or in teaching; and should enjoy working with people. Experience necessary in staff and volunteer leadership.

Some week-end work required, also travelling.

Application forms and further details can be had from:
The Hon. Chelmen, N.A.W.C.
5 Venon Rise, Kings Cross Road
London WC1X 9EP
(large s.e.d., please)

Closing date for applications is 15th June, 1977.

Westminster Abbey Bookshop

Manager Designate

Applicants are invited from men or women for this appointment, which, subject to a satisfactory probation, will lead to appointment as Manager when the present holder of this post retires in March, 1978.

Applicants should be in the 35 to 45 age group, preferably married, physically fit, with knowledge of the book trade, considerable experience in the field of shop management and staff control and in dealing with customers of many different nationalities.

The salary of the Manager is linked to the Higher Executive Officer scale of the Civil Service, beginning at a point commensurate with age and experience. The salary of the Manager Designate will be negotiable but not less than £4,000.

For full details and application form please write enclosing stamped addressed envelope to the Receiver General, Room 5, The Chapter Office, 20 Dean's Yard, London SW1P 3PA.

County of Cleveland

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

TEMPORARY INSTRUCTOR

Remuneration at Burnham Scale 1 or equivalent rate.

Required for the period of 8th June-17th July, 1977 at LANEHEAD OUTDOOR PURSUITS CENTRE, CONISTON, CUMBRIA.

Accommodation provided in return for extraneous duties.

Candidates should apply by letter to the Principal, stating their experience/qualifications in the following: canoeing, sailing, mountaineering, climbing. The name and address of a referee should also be supplied.

Closing date 27th May, 1977.

CITY OF SHEFFIELD

City Museums

ASSISTANT KEEPER

EXTENSION SERVICES

£2,922-£4,095 (progression beyond £3,702 depends on obtaining the Diploma of the Museums Association) (+£312 p.a.)

Should possess a degree and have some experience either in museum work or in teaching. Will be required to assist in the developing educational work of the museums. Will have a major share in the organisation of the annual Craftsweek Fair at the Abbeydale Industrial Hamlet and will also be involved in the setting up and circulation of temporary exhibitions.

Applications forms obtainable from the Director, City Museum, Weston Park, Sheffield S10 2TP, to be returned to the Chief Personnel Officer, 2/4 Malacca Street, Sheffield S1 4DD not later than 14th June. Please indicate on application form Ref. TEB.

MISCELLANEOUS

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EASTBOURNE

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PERSONAL LOANS

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CARPETS FURNITURE

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HOTEL FOR LADIES

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